



## ***MCUUF NEWSLETTER—May 2019***

### ***MINISTER’S MESSAGE***

As I sit here at Newark Airport waiting to board a plane to come back home, I am in a multicultural, international environment that is more diverse than what I have encountered during similar waits at the Portland Airport. The range of languages and styles of dress are refreshingly different from what we typically encounter in the Gorge. A fish doesn't realize the water in which it swims until it leaves the pond.

I am seeing the water in which I swim with eyes whose vision is clearer. Not 20/20 vision, but better vision than before. I've been at the Unitarian Universalist Buddhist Fellowship Convocation, experiencing the teachings of Dr. Jan Willis, professor emerita of religion at Wesleyan University, Buddhist studies scholar, and pioneer in the history of Buddhism's migration to the West. Dr. Willis studied abroad in India and Nepal in the late 1960s as a philosophy undergraduate at Cornell and experienced an environment where her black skin wasn't a liability for the first time in her life. The convocation participants and I were companions on a journey into black experiences that have been happening all around us but have been largely invisible to white people.

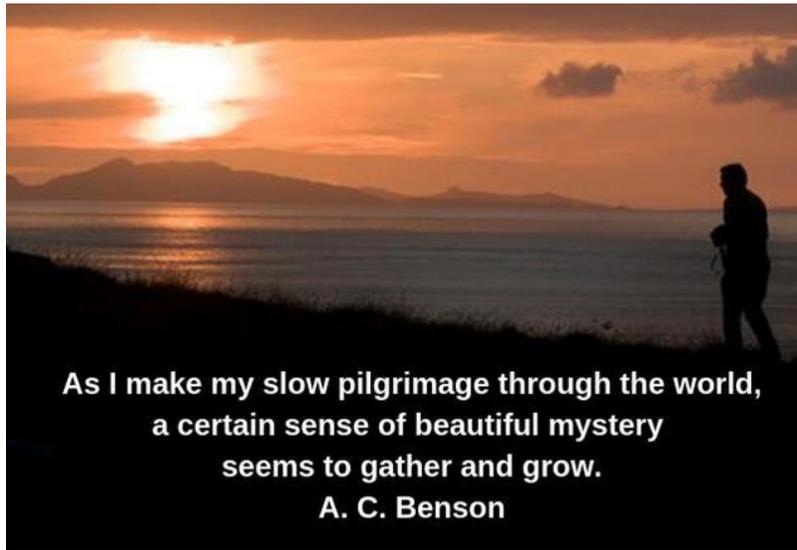
I had hoped to leave the convocation with a set of tools that might offer direction for making progress towards eliminating the scourge that is racism. Instead, I find myself immersed in mystery that doesn't have an immediate solution. Mystery requires that we move into the unknown and uncertain and be willing to listen and keep our hearts open. While experiencing the stories of people of color, such as the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, or James Baldwin's poignant letter to his nephew, I wanted to turn away at times. Yet mystery entails engagement of our whole selves, not shutting down, if mystery is to touch us with its wisdom and transform our lives.

Poet Mary Oliver said, "I stood willingly and gladly in the characters of everything—other people, trees, clouds. And this is what I learned, that the world's otherness is antidote to confusion—that standing within this otherness—the beauty and the mystery of the world . . . can re-dignify the worst-stung heart." We may appear different from one another, yet opening ourselves to learning the stories of others—as they themselves tell them—is to taste the richness of this world. Who knows what wonder awaits from such an encounter?

With love,

Rev. Judy

***Want to meet? Please call (503-970-0564) or email [jzimmerman@uuma.org](mailto:jzimmerman@uuma.org)  
and let's find a time that works.***



Pilgrim, by Benjamin Dobson, August 5, 2011, (CC BY 2.0),  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/systemaabstracta/6603465531>

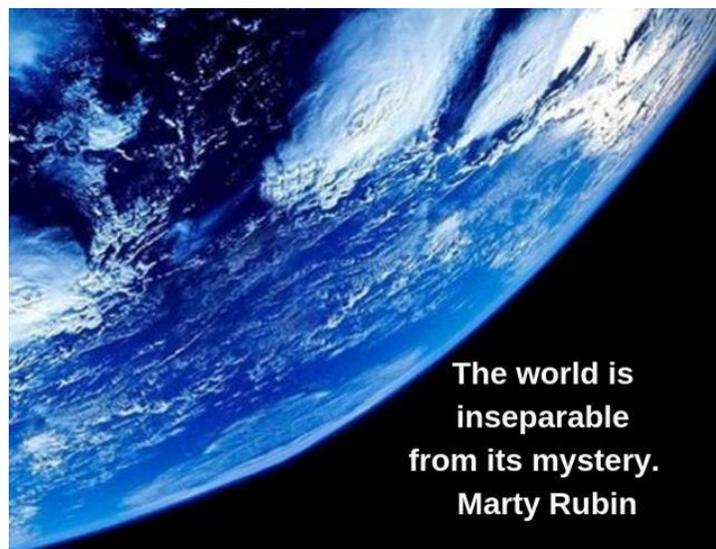
## ***MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD***

Calling on all MCUUF members (and friends): Mark your calendars for **Sunday, May 19**, for our annual congregational meeting immediately following the service.

This is a super-important meeting to decide key things about the coming year of our fellowship. The nominating committee will present candidates for the future board. The current board will present the proposed budget. There will be time for discussion and then you vote—yes vote! Your involvement is paramount! As we have seen exemplified on the national stage, voting has impact. Your presence and vote is your voice. Please plan to attend.

The documents associated with this meeting (annual reports, proposed budget, etc.) will be coming via email soon.

Again, Sunday, May 19, is the Annual Mid-Columbia Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Congregational Meeting. See you there!



Earth, by Beth Scupham, January 28, 2012, (CC BY 2.0),  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/bethscupham/7663247816>

# **SUNDAY SERVICES**

**10 a.m. at the Rockford Grange**  
**This Month's Theme: "Mystery"**

**May 5: "Celebrating our Theological Diversity" by Elaine C.**

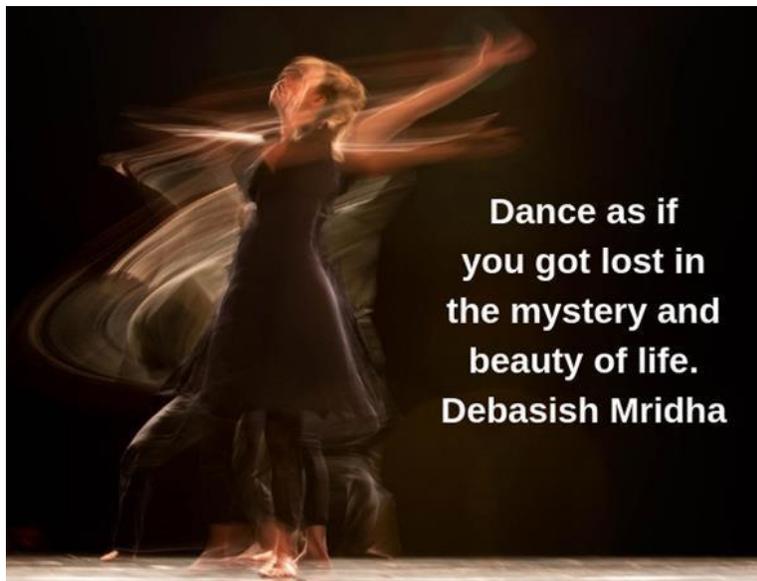
Put together ten Unitarian Universalists and you will probably find eleven different theological opinions. Sometimes this diversity can be problematic—but it is also a potential source of strength and vitality. As a part of the service, Heidi Venture will describe for us her Eye to Eye program, which works to help people communicate across political and religious divides.

**May 12: "Loving the Longing" Rev. Judy Zimmerman** and Sullivan M, celebrant. The life and poetry of Rumi inspires this service, in which we will explore connections between the first source of Unitarian Universalism and the Sufi mystical tradition of Islam.

**May 19: The wonderful storyteller Will Hornyak** joins us to discuss our theme of Mystery.

**Our Annual Congregational Meeting** will be held on immediately after the service.  
Child care will be provided.

**May 26, "Medieval Mystics" Rev. Judy Zimmerman** and Elaine C, celebrant. The Middle Ages in Europe was a time of unusual empowerment for a small group of women who followed a mystical Christian path. Their ways of understanding the holy would be controversial even today. Through music, chanting and meditation, we will get to know these women and their unique spirituality.



Dance as if  
you got lost in  
the mystery and  
beauty of life.  
Debasish Mridha

Photo by Ahmad Odeh on Unsplash

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Join MCUUF teens June 2 for a morning at the river. Our usual Sunday service will be held at the Hood River waterfront at 10 a.m. Afterward there will be games, yoga, and a "no-talent" show. Bring a dish (it's potluck!) and your expert golf skills!

Due to lack of signups, there will be no summer OWL. Keep an eye out, as there may be a fall/winter course the 2019/20 school year.

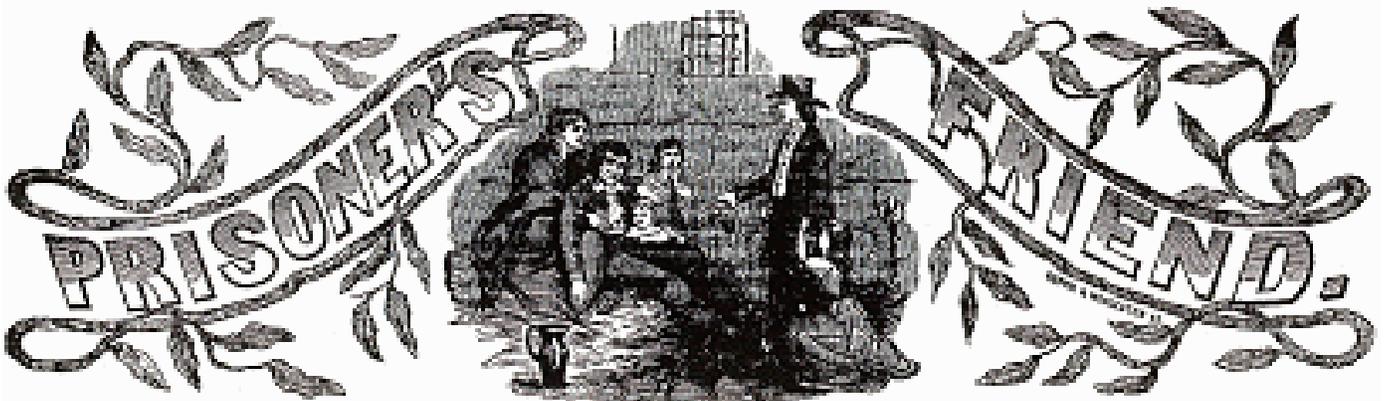
# ***PLEDGES***

**We have increased our pledge total to \$74,900!** Thanks to those who have pledged; thanks to those who have “dug deeper” to help MCUUF; thanks to Paul B, Tom K, Steve C. and Marjorie I. for their work on the Pledge Team. A reminder: pledges are for our *next* fiscal year (2019/2020), starting July 1. No need to pay until after July 1. If you do pay early, please indicate that it is your 2019/2020 pledge. This will help us keep the donations in the right year and the right bank account.

If you haven't yet pledged, or would like to UP your pledge, please email Cindy A, MCUUF treasurer, at [mcuuf.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:mcuuf.treasurer@gmail.com) with your name and pledge amount. Your pledge supports our UU values.

## ***MOMENTS IN UU HISTORY***

By Bonnie W.



If you are one of the many MCUUF members who are engaged in the issues of prison reform and prisoner rights, you follow in a long line of forebears. Among the many early Unitarians and Universalists who fought for justice for the incarcerated, we remember Charles Spear, who was born on May 1, 1803, in Boston.

Spear, a student of Universalist Hosea Ballou, served churches in Massachusetts and Hartford. In a time when opposition to capital punishment was a radical position, Spear fought tirelessly against it in his role as general agent of the Massachusetts Society for the Abolition of Capital Punishment. Consider the familiar strains of this argument:

“He declared capital punishment an unjust and arbitrary exercise of power, an instrument not fit for the Republic. Moreover, injustice was multiplied by unequal application of the penalty according to race.” (UUdb.org)

In 1845, Spear began producing a newsletter, first called “The Hangman,” then “The Prisoner’s Friend.” His work to move prisons from punishment to rehabilitation, improve conditions, run a half-way house for parolees, and end the death penalty caused him to become known as “The Prisoner’s Friend.” Through his efforts, the death penalty was abolished in three states and applied less often in others.

Spear set up a chaplaincy among the camps surrounding Washington, DC, in 1862. His intense work led to his death from what his wife called “nervous exhaustion” the following year.

When you visit the historic cemetery at King’s Chapel in Boston, stop for a moment to pay homage at the grave of Charles Spear, The Prisoner’s Friend.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## CONNECTION

***Celebrate Rev. Judy's New House.*** Come join us in celebrating Rev. Judy's move into her new home in Parkdale. The housewarming and open house will be from 3 to 5 p.m. Saturday, May 4. All ages welcome. There will be games for the kids. **No gifts, please.**

***"UU 101"— Sunday May 5, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.*** Do you want to know more about Unitarian Universalism? What we believe and practice? Bring your questions and curiosity and join us for a light lunch in the "Wiggle Room." Child care available on request. This gathering will be led by our Membership Engagement Team and Rev. Judy. For more information, contact Steve C. or contact Rev. Judy.

***New-member ceremony: May 12.*** A new-member ceremony will be held during the Sunday service on May 12. If you are interested in becoming a member of the fellowship, please contact Steve C. or Rev. Judy Zimmerman.

***UU General Assembly Spokane, WA, June 19-23*** We are in need of on-site or off-site delegates for the UUA General Assembly in Spokane on June 20 - 22nd. This is a wonderful opportunity to experience varied forms of inspirational worship, attend workshops, vote on governance issues in the UU Association and get to know other UUs from across the world. *Registration rates increase May 1.* For more information go to <https://www.uua.org/ga>

## PASTORAL CARE

MCUUF Care Team Event:

***Alzheimer's and Dementia Mental Health Advance Directive Presentation and Discussion, Saturday May 18.*** The nonprofit **End of Life Washington (EOLW)** will be with us to present its advance planning document, which allows people coping with Alzheimer's disease and dementia to document their wishes about the inevitable challenges related to living with these illnesses. You can use it to document your wishes and provide a guide for your family, health care providers, long-term care providers, and others. EOLW has worked with a team of lawyers, psychologists and social workers to create this document. Instructions for oral feeding as well as voluntary stop-eating and -drinking will also be discussed. A morning snack will be provided. Rockford Grange, Saturday, May 18, 11 a.m.

***When to Contact the Care Team:*** Our Care Team stands ready to contact anyone in our UU community who may need help. They may be in a tight squeeze and wondering if they can make rent this month. Their moving help may have fallen through. They may need a ride to MCUUF events or Sunday Service. They may be laid up for a while from surgery or illness. They may be having difficulty caring for a loved one.

These are but a few of the circumstances where our Care Team coordinates assistance with fellowship members, a private conversation with our minister or a care team member, or a referral to community or social services. We walk through the challenges of life together. You are not alone.

## SOCIAL ACTION

**The FISH food bank team needs a new organizer.** MCUUF provides the team of volunteers who operate the Hood River FISH food bank on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of once every eight or nine weeks. Susan T. is stepping down from organizing our FISH food bank team so our team needs a new organizer. The main task is to send out a mass-distribution email to our established list of volunteers before each MCUUF volunteer week. Several emails are usually required to fill the MCUUF volunteer positions. Susan will gladly help you get started. This is a must-have position for our MCUUF FISH food bank effort! Please consider volunteering to lead the MCUUF FISH food bank volunteer team. For more information, contact Susan T, or Steve C.

## VOLUNTEER HELP NEEDED

**The board is seeking additional volunteers** for our new "Generosity Team." If interested, contact [mcuuf prez@gmail.com](mailto:mcuuf prez@gmail.com) or talk to Lori G.

**The financial committee** is looking for a new member, particularly someone with experience in financial management and investments. If you are interested, please contact [mcuuf.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:mcuuf.treasurer@gmail.com).

Thanks to all those that have been helping with the dishes after church. Please keep up the good work!

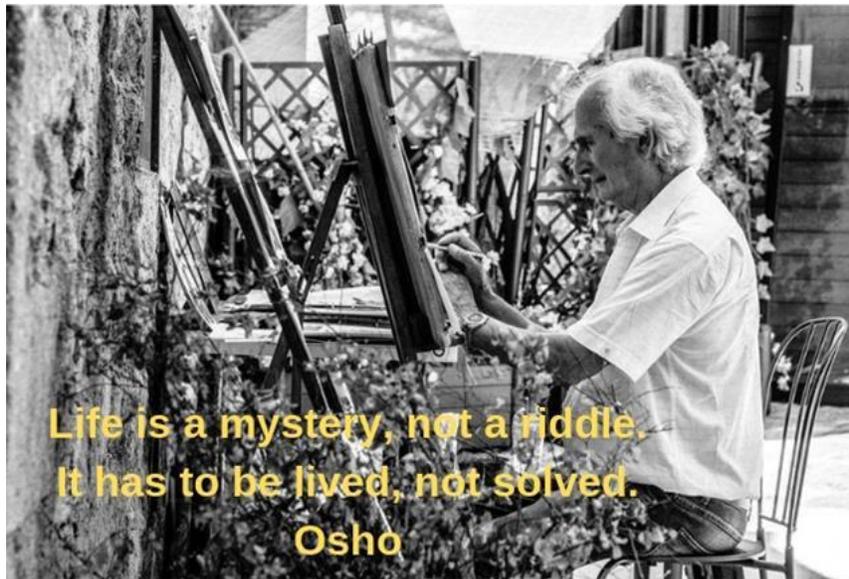


Photo by Filippo Andolfatto on Unsplash

## Mid-Columbia Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Curious about what's happening, when, and where? Go to [www.mcuuf.org](http://www.mcuuf.org)

Would you like to subscribe to this newsletter and the weekly eNews?

Just send an email to [mcuuf1@gmail.com](mailto:mcuuf1@gmail.com) with the word "subscribe" in the subject line.

To unsubscribe from MCUUF emails, please send an email to [mcuuf1@gmail.com](mailto:mcuuf1@gmail.com) with "unsubscribe" in the subject line.

**The deadline for inclusion in the weekly eNews is midnight (11:59 p.m.) Monday. The MCUUF Newsletter comes out on the first Wednesday of each month (unless otherwise announced).**

**The deadline for inclusion is midnight of the prior Monday.**

**Please send your submissions to Brad at [mcuuf1@gmail.com](mailto:mcuuf1@gmail.com)**